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The Return of the Democratic Party to Power in 1884. By HARRISON COOK THOMAS, Ph.D. (New York: Columbia University Press. 1919. Pp. 261.)

One cannot read Dr. Thomas's monograph without being impressed with the astonishingly close resemblance between the party situation in the period 1880-84 and the party situation in 1916-20. A comparison of the two periods, even with due allowance for differences, will furnish slight comfort to those who rejoice to think that they discern in the present indistinctness of party lines and absence of clear-cut fundamental issues, unmistakable symptoms of the early demise of the old parties and the emergence of new parties bearing the labels, Liberal and Conservative. For some such prediction in the early eighties there was about as much foundation as there is today.

While Dr. Thomas has evidently made a painstaking first-hand study of contemporary newspapers, biographical and autobiographical material and campaign literature, his conclusions respecting the influence of the several factors in the election of 1884 are not essentially different in most respects from those reached by earlier writers, notably Sparks, Rhodes and Stanwood.

The material in this volume is well arranged and presented in a pleasing style with a commendable degree of detachment, discrimination and impartiality. The least satisfactory part of the work is the unnecessarily long introductory sketch of political events from 1860 to 1880, which constitutes almost one-fourth of the book. The portions which come the nearest to being real contributions are those dealing with the Independent movement and the part played by Benjamin F. Butler.

Dr. Thomas has performed a real service in bringing together more widely selected and carefully digested material relating to the presidential campaign and election of 1884 than is to be found in any other volume.

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Our War with Germany. By JOHN SPENCER BASSETT. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1919. Pp. 378.)

Professor Bassett has written modestly and intelligently in a field in which it would be easy to go far astray, and has attained more than the "reasonable accuracy" that his preface hopes for. No better book

is as yet available for the student interested in our participation in the world war, and no other is so detached and historical-minded as this. It will be a useful handbook in the numerous courses on the history and diplomacy of the war now under way.

The least successful portion of the book is that which covers the obscure yet significant leadership of the United States in the development of the "single front," military and economic. Professor Bassett appears to have overlooked a group of facts that may prove, eventually, to cover the key to Allied victory. "Inter-allied" does not appear in his index, nor does "Supreme," which ran in the titles of many coöperative control bodies; while "Allied" appears but once, and then refers to an inadequate and misleading statement (p. 296) respecting the Allied Naval Council. The fact is that in the summer of 1917 American loans started a course of events that led irresistibly to the Supreme War Council of December, the supreme command of March, 1918, and the pooling of resources upon the basis of "work or fight" in August. Enough of the evidence on this point is visible to make it a matter of regret that Professor Bassett failed to see it.

The general survey of events lacks dramatic appreciation, and is tiresome but sound in the chapters preceding the outbreak of the war. The external facts are generally unimpeachable. Here and there a slip has been noticed: the earliest Plattsburg camp was in 1915, not 1916 (p. 121); Hoover was named food commissioner May 19, 1917, not May 20 (p. 138); the order taking over the railroads was dated December 26, not 27 (p. 150); Mr. Ryan's promotion to assistant secretary of war (p. 188) was more than an elevation in rank, for he assumed control of the division of military aeronautics, in addition to that of aircraft production; Foch seems to have become commander in chief March 26, 1918, two days earlier than Mr. Bassett's date (p. 221); action on the Saloniki front began September 15, 1918, not September 16 (p. 263).

Such errors are trifles. The book is a commendable and useful enterprise.

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